FREE

TASA SPORTS

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2015

JENNY FROM THE BLOCK

Q&A: WHAT IS CROSSFIT?
LITTLE LEAGUE = BIG HEARTS
SPORTS GROUPS COME TO THE RESCUE
A LANDLUBBER TAKES TO CNMI WATERS
7 TIPS FOR A HEALTHIER BACK-TO SCHOOL
BEN BABAUTA'S OTHER KIND OF WINNING

Tan Holdings

Tan Siu Lin Foundation

2015 SPORTS CALENDAR

OCTOBER

NMIFA Youth Football Fall League: The CNMI's different soccer clubs fight for girls and boys U15 and U18 supremacy, while enhancing their respective grassroots program in the younger age groups.

NMA All Schools Cross Country Series: The island's middle distance runners hit the road to battle for individual honors and championships for their schools.

XTERRA World Championships: The CNMI's triathletes who made the grade during XTERRA Saipan will be up for the biggest and toughest offroad race in Hawaii this year.

NOVEMBER

Tan Holdings Tennis Classic: The Tan Siu Lin Foundation-backed tournament will be Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association's first event for the 2015-2016 season and will feature players from Saipan and Guam.

Turkey Trut Run: The annual trek to Mt. Tapochao starts at Lower Base in the early morning of Thanksgiving Day.

DECEMBER

Hell of Marianas: The century cycle race around the island brings together local and international riders and is billed as one of the toughest cycling competitions in Micronesia.

SSC Jingle Bell Fun Run: This fundraising race from Minatchom Atdao pavilion to Quartermaster Road and back is for the benefit of Saipan Swim Club.

NMIFA U12 Interscholastic Football League: School pride will be at stake in this annual competition as students from both public and private schools square off for the girls and boys championships.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the fifth anniversary edition of TAGA *Sports*!

Our first edition, published way back in October 2010, had as its main feature the Commonwealth's successful participation in the 7th Micronesian Games in Palau. It was a promising start but we can now admit that, at the time, we were still fumbling with this new medium, having been entrenched in newspapering for more than a decade and buying magazines mostly for their bite-sized stories and their extremely helpful ability to brighten up a drab coffee table or a doctor's waiting room.

I'd like to believe that TAGA *Sports* has since evolved, not only in its design elements but also in the quality of its stories and photos, more contributing writers who add extra breadth and depth to our coverage, and the facility with which we cobble an issue for publication. Not that it is now easier to produce a new edition. What used to take three to four weeks to stitch together still takes about the same length of time, minus a day or two. However, this time there's much lesser wringing of hands, fewer shouting matches, and less tension-filled story conferences.

One of the things that has made our jobs that much easier is the increasingly cooperative nature of our story sources and I believe that is primarily due to the heightened credibility of TAGA *Sports* as a publication mainstay in the Commonwealth. We are no longer just a flash in the pan. We have managed to last this long and we have high hopes for the next five years as the Commonwealth itself goes through the next stage of its evolution, with the local sports world boasting a crop of fresh faces, a slew of young athletes waiting in the wings for their turn, and major regional competitions on the horizon.

If there is one thing I'd like more of, that would be comments and letters from you, our readers. Your opinions, comments, complaints, and suggestions matter to us—very much—and we would like to feature more of your thoughts in TAGA *Sports*. We actually have a section called Back Talk that features readers' feedback and that will be our challenge in future editions of the magazine: to engage you, our readers, by soliciting your comments and helping shape the future growth of TAGA *Sports*. Just email them to editor@saipantribune.com and we'd be sure to include them in Back Talk. Letters should include your name, general village address (no P.O. box), and a phone number for verification purposes (the phone number will not be published).

We hope you enjoy reading this latest edition of TAGA *Sports*!

Sinseramente,

JAYVEE VALLEJERA
editor@saipantribune.com
Managing Editor

COVER ART

Jenny Hegland lines up the ball at the LaoLao Bay Golf and Resort.

Photography by
ROSELYN MONROYO

TAGA SPORTS

VOLUME 5 NO. 21
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WRITERS' BLOC

KAISA ANDERSON

Kaisa is a Registered Dietitian for the Public School System. The summer sped by so fast, but she worked, and had fun going diving and to BBQs. She is excited for this school year to work with kids on developing new recipes and ideas for school meals.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

After volunteering at the Salvation Army's soup kitchen in the aftermath of Typhoon Soudelor, Roselyn now admits it is easier to write sports stories than to scoop out rice and corned beef from the pot more than a thousand times in just three hours.

JON PEREZ

Jon was confined at the Commonwealth Health Center when Typhoon Soudelor battered Saipan. He could hear the howling winds and see the swaying trees from his room window.

MARK RABAGO

Mark covered the 2015 TOC the day Typhoon Soudelor struck. He admired how golfers braved Soudelor's approaching winds by finishing Day 2 of the biggest golfing event of the year. Mark now also sports an eternal reminder of Soudelor's passing—a scar on his left cheek that he proudly wears.

JIM RAYPHAND

Jim is the executive director of the Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems Inc., more popularly known as NMPASI, a local non-profit organization that provides advocacy services on behalf of individuals with disabilities and their families in the CNMI.

FRAULEINE S. VILLANUEVA

Frauleine was once a sports writer but is a rookie in the sporting world of the CNMI. The Saipan Fishing Derby was the first fishing trip of her life as she was a city girl prior to moving to Saipan just a few months ago.

Email letters to the editor to editor@saipantribune.com or mail to PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan MP 96950. Submissions to TAGA Sports must include the writer's name, village address (no P.O. boxes), and daytime phone or mobile number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity and may be published or used in any medium. All submissions become the property of the publication and will not be returned.

Sleep, eat right, and 5 other tips for a healthier back-to-school

KAISA ANDERSON, RD
Contributing Writer

School is back in session for another round of learning, extra-curricular activities, and sports seasons. Schedules with school assignments and projects, activities, and sports become busy, which can make it hard to remember to fuel your body properly. Here are some tips to keep your students healthy, brains energized and learning, and bodies in top shape for their sport of choice.

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Today, 1 in 3 children and adolescents, ages 2-19, are overweight or obese—triple the rate from just one generation ago.

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1. Catch some zzzzzz's.

You may think this isn't a nutrition tip, but it is related to nutrition, student's learning, and athletic performance. This may not be news to you, but numerous studies have shown a connection between those with a lack of sleep have difficulty with weight loss and obesity. Additionally, studies also show a relationship between how students do better in school and receive higher grades when they get more hours of sleep each night. This shows, that not only does sleep affect your weight and health, but also your student's learning. Now, imagine how it could also affect your thinking and muscle performance in sports.

2. Quench your thirst, not your sweet tooth.

Students, especially teens, have a hard time staying away from the sports drinks, sweet teas, sweetened coffee, or frappes. The truth is, these only add unnecessary calories, do not quench your thirst, and can leave you dehydrated. Water, milk, and coconut water are the best options to stay hydrated on and off the field. If you are a young athlete then a sports drink might be helpful to give you added calories for an extended period of training, such as an all-day soccer tournament. But be cautious of sugary drinks during the school day; they will only drain you of energy and add calories that may turn to body fat if not used.

3. Breakfast. The most important meal of the day.

For young athletes and students, breakfast is mandatory. Your brain's main source of energy is glucose. Glucose comes from any food containing carbohydrates. This includes foods such as bread, rice, pasta, quinoa, fruit, and starchy vegetables such as corn, potato, and sweet potato. In order for a student or athlete to perform to the best of their abilities, they need to feed their body, but most importantly their brain, especially after fasting while asleep. So start your day right with breakfast. There is no excuse to skip breakfast because it is offered every morning at school, including servings of whole grain, fruit, and milk.

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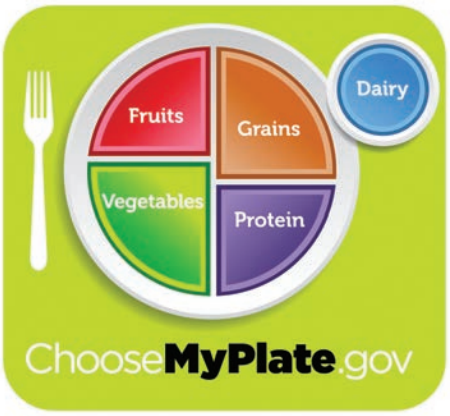

4 Lunch is the best 'class' of the day.

The National School Lunch Program Act was passed as law back in 1946 by President Harry S. Truman. One of many reasons was because 40 percent of men who were to be drafted for the war were rejected because they were malnourished. It was clear children were hungry, people did not have food and farmers during the time needed help with their crops. Thus a program was created that supported farmers, and also provided food to support the National School Lunch Program. Today, after many renovations to policies and guidelines, school lunch programs base their menu on of the MyPlate model. This model encourages every meal to contain servings of whole grain, protein, milk, fruit, and vegetables from one of the five different vegetable group types. Encourage your students to refuel their brain for learning and your student-athletes to strengthen their bodies for the next big game by eating their fruits and vegetables at lunch.

5 Pre-game booster.

No matter a student's age, a snack at afternoon recess break or after school is recommended for students for multiple reasons. When students refuel for the last part of the day with a healthy snack, they can focus and finish out their learning day. Also, the snack will help keep your student feeling full until dinner, making them less likely to hop off the bus and grab an unhealthy snack from the local store. Snacks should be focused on being whole foods, and not highly processed with lots of sugar, salt, or fat. Try to help students pick snacks that come from one of the five food groups from the MyPlate healthy eating model—a whole grain, a protein, fruit, milk, or vegetable. Such snacks can be granola bars, hard-boiled eggs or cheese, a banana, milk or reduced fat chocolate milk, or local cucumbers. Be sure to also check your snacks nutrition facts on a Smart Snacks calculator supported by Alliance for a Healthier Generation at healthiergeneration.org.

6 Starting learning early.

It is so important to teach and be an example of healthy eating. Currently, the Head Start centers and participating Kindergarten classes in the Public School System are teaching children about a featured fruit and vegetable every month.

The students are getting samples of the fresh produce once a week so they can try it among peers while learning why it is good to eat for their bodies. The purpose of the program is to plant seeds of nutrition knowledge for our students that they may grow up learning and knowing why fruits and vegetables are good for them. More exposure to these foods will help them develop healthy habits and help children make better food choices.

7 Be aware of fasting and dieting.

Some studies have shown that young girls have started dieting since they were the age of 7. Instead of placing children who are classified as overweight or obese on diets, it is better they develop healthy eating and exercise habits. It's about children reducing the amount of sugary beverages and high fat snacks eaten to eating more fruits and vegetables and participating in regular amounts of exercise they enjoy. Sometimes children decide to go on diets because they see adults dieting or have been influenced by their friends. Athletes who are students are also at risk, especially if they are in sports or activities that require a body type or weight class for competition. Be mindful and involved in your child's eating and help them understand a healthy balanced diet is better for their body in the long term than a trophy in a case.

Whether your student is an athlete and plays sports, participates in the arts, or other academic activities, education of healthy living starts now. The decisions they make based from the foods they eat and in which activities they participate now affect the diseases they will or will not have in the future. By grooming the youth of the CNMI with the knowledge needed to perform their best academically and athletically, they have the chance as the next TAGA *Sports* athletes and healthy contributors to the community. Happy eating!

GYT

GET YOURSELF TESTED

STDs are Sexually Transmitted Diseases.

One-half of all cases of STDs occur in people aged 15-24.

There are many different types of STDs. Some common STDs are Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, Herpes and HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Ben Babauta is in it to win it

ROSELYNMONROYO
TAGA Sports Staff Writer

Wait. It's not that kind of winning, which most competitive athletes aim for every time they join tournaments.

Rather, Ben Babauta considers himself a "try-athlete," participating in a handful of sports competitions on Saipan and its neighboring islands (Tinian and Guam) without being dead set on getting medals or trophies. Babauta has his eyes on a different prize—a healthy body.

"I started getting involved in sports after my annual physical checkup (September 2008) and my doctor informed me that I really need to take care of myself by exercising and reducing my weight"—at the time he tipped the scales at 248 lbs—"because all the physical vital results were over borderline for my age," said the 47-year-old Babauta. "I also thought of my three grandsons and wanted to spend time with them as they grow. Now, I am maintaining 185 lbs."

His change of lifestyle began with running. After a few months he picked up a bike and tried cycling. He did both in succeeding years and on a few occasions made the jump to triathlon, even though swimming is not his thing.

Challenge and motivation

Out of shape and used to a sedentary lifestyle, Babauta struggled when he first ventured into the world of sports.

Ben Babauta sprints to the finish line during one of the earlier Pre-Hell of Marianas races.

"I was still heavy and needed to build up my stamina," said Babauta. "I had lots of bike crashes, but thankfully no serious ones."

He started doing short courses and gradually increased his distance. Now he loves running long courses and even tried running and biking along trails.

"I find it most challenging and enjoy the endurance; the longer the run, the better. Also, I was motivated by international athletes and age group runners/bikers who are participating. I strongly believe that I can do it, not as fast as they can but I will finish," he said.

Babauta, who works at T Galleria as its assistant general manager for operations, initially found it a wonder that he could do a marathon but he has come to relish the unique challenges these events offer.

"The most challenging event was the 30K Coffee Trail Run which I did about four years ago and completed in five hours and 10 minutes. Tour de Tinian was also tough because I never did 100K MTB before. I will be back for it next year."

With the demand of his work, his family, and the time he spends in training and community service, did he ever think of quitting and going back to his old unhealthy ways?

"No. I made it a culture by exercising daily as early as 4:30am. I remade my DNA and basically became addicted [to running]. I must do it daily," Babauta said.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Ben Babauta nears completion of the half marathon event in the 2013 Saipan Marathon.

Priceless

Babauta already has a long list of events he did in the first three quarters of this year and a few more are lined up.

He was one of the few who completed Saipan's trifecta—XTERRA Saipan, Tagaman, and Saipan Marathon (42K). He also joined the Annual Coffee Trail Run (21K), PIC Roadrace (21K), Guam Marathon (42K) and Tour de Tinian (100K MTB), along with the small bike and run races on Saipan. Next month, Babauta will be competing in Tour de Guahan, while in December he is going to Hawaii for the Honolulu Marathon (Dec. 13). Babauta also plans to race in the Hell of Marianas at the end of this year.

His dream race? The 100K Mont Blanc Race, which according to Babauta involves 19 to 30 hours of running.

The number of competitions he has participated in tops the number of medals and awards he got from these races but he doesn't mind. "I really enjoy participating in running and bike races and completing the course as fast as I can; not necessarily to win but support the organizers and the event itself. I also enjoy meeting participants, both local and visitors. Just the great feeling after training hard and doing the actual race and completing it is priceless for me," he said.

How long will he be a "try-athlete"?

"I will continue do to races every year and as long as I am healthy and strong for my love for my family, my job, and Saipan."

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'They can be depended on'

I've been bleeding to piece together a story about the CNMI sports community's assistance in the relief and recovery efforts on Saipan in the aftermath of Typhoon Soudelor when I came across a movie titled *When The Game Stands Tall*.

The movie featured Bob Ladouceur, an American football coach in high school who is best remembered for delivering this line to his athletes: "It ain't about the football. It ain't about scoring touchdowns. It's about moving you in a direction that can assist you and help you to grow up...so that when you take your place out in the world and in our community, you can be depended on."

Can be depended on—that fittingly describes the CNMI sports community as

Frank "The Crank" Camacho helps load donated supplies from Guam.

ROSELYNMONROYO
TAGA *Sports* Staff Writer

Talaabwogh Stars members and other volunteers participate in a clean-up drive in Tanapag in the aftermath of Typhoon Soudelor.

seen in its volunteer works after Typhoon Soudelor ravaged Saipan in August.

Leading the list of dependable members of the CNMI sports community are the Talaabwogh Stars, whose members include Little League players and coaches. They stepped up to the plate for the village of Tanapag, handing out important supplies like water, clothing, and food to typhoon victims.

"We're at the far northern part of the island and we knew it will take days before help comes, especially to those families who have no means of transportation so the day right after the typhoon, we went out and provided help to people in our villages and our members," said Talaabwogh Stars president Malcolm Omar.

At some point, members and officials had to use their own money to buy supplies given out to affected Tanapag residents.

"We have members who are victims of the typhoon too, but still they chose to help others and share what they have," Omar said.

Besides donating basic necessities, Talaabwogh Stars, which has about 250 members, including around 100 Little League and baseball players, also did a cleanup drive in their village and provided school supplies to Tanapag students.

"Some parents spent their money for the repairs of their home and food so they have limited or no money left to buy schools supplies. We're happy we were able to help families send their children to school and give Tanapag students the things they needed in time for the beginning of classes," the Talaabwogh Stars head said.

Over at the Oleai Sports Complex, which sustained significant damage, Northern Mariana Islands Football Association president Jerry Tan and members of NMIFA-affiliated clubs and the CNMI national teams (U14, U16, U19 age groups) cleared and cleaned the facility for two days. The football community's work at the Oleai complex made life easier for Tony Rogolifio, the executive director of the Northern Marianas Sports Association, which oversees the management and operation of the sports facility.

"Jerry Tan and his staff saved us a lot of money and days for clearing and cleaning some of the facilities at the complex," Rogolifoi said.

With his two staff unable to report for work after being greatly affected by the typhoon, the NMA executive director labored for several days to restore some semblance of normalcy at the complex. He was assisted by his young grandchildren and teenage relatives, who were saddened to see their playing field messed up just as they were about to return to baseball and Little League practices.

Another sports facility, the TSL Sports Complex, got the needed clearing and

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NMIFA president Jerry Tan leads members of the football community in a clean-up drive at the Oleai Sports Complex.

cleanup from CNMI Women's National Team players. The group did the same job in some portion of Beach Road.

"School was still off then and the girls have yet to return to training so they volunteered to participate in the cleanup drive along Beach Road and the TSL Sports Complex to make good use of their time and do their share in helping out the community recover from the typhoon," team manager Angie Ito said.

There were other members of the CNMI sports community who took the initiative to help in the recovery efforts on the island. These include Saipan-raised MMA fighter Frank "The Crank" Camacho, the Rollers Basketball Club, swimmer Victoria Chentsova, and MP United Football Club's Gregory Song.

Camacho brought to Saipan a 40-foot container of goods donated by his sponsors from Guam and other concerned individuals and companies, while RBC members volunteered at the Nutrition Assistance Program office, and Chentsova spent time at the Salvation Army's soup kitchen.

Song missed an annual summer vacation in South Korea for a good cause, joining United 4 Saipan, a non-profit organization born after Typhoon Soudelor and was one of the first few groups to provide help to residents living in remote villages. Song went on to somehow "adopt" a family of seven in Kagman, personally delivering necessary supplies from United 4 Saipan and his friends and relatives who learned of his volunteer work.

Gregory Song gives a container of water to a typhoon victim during United 4 Saipan's visit in Kagman.

There may be more athletes and teams left out from this laudatory list of volunteers in the relief efforts on Saipan, but they deserve the same recognition given to those mentioned in this story. People like them make us proud to be part of a community that triumphs in times of difficulties.

Prevention Works. Treatment is Effective. People Recover.

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC)

Community Guidance Center (CGC)

CGC is the primary provider for behavioral health services in the CNMI. CGC offers comprehensive services for children, adolescents, adults, and older adults dealing with emotional, behavioral, or substance abuse-related problems. See CGC's programs and services below!

Substance Abuse Prevention Services

A Substance Abuse Prevention Program focusing on Underage Drinking and Prescription Drug misuse and abuse. Promoting a Drug-Free CNMI!

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- **Social Marketing Information available upon request.**
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Located on Navy Hill at the Community Guidance Center BuildingHours:
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Substance Abuse Treatment Services

If you or someone you know is struggling with substance use issue,CGC offers Substance Abuse Treatment services to put one on the path to recovery. The CGC Recovery Program approach is aimed at helping clients with chemical and/or alcohol dependency understand the behavioral and psychological effects of psychoactive substances and develop practical lifestyle changes and coping strategies that enhance quality of life.

They include: *Screening/Registration, Intake Assessment, Substance Abuse/Addictions Evaluation, Patient Consultation, Treatment/Discharge Planning, Brief Intervention; Individual Counselling, Psychoeducational class (Discovery), Peer Support, Connection to Recovery Community, Connection to Recovery Meetings (12 Step; Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Crystal Meth Anonymous, etc.).*

Located on Navy Hill on Gloria Drive
Appointment Hours: Monday to Friday, 7:30 AM – 4:30 PM
Telephone: (670) 323-6560/1

Transitional Living Center

The Transitional Living Center offers programs and rehabilitation services for those with mental illness and those with disabilities to help them achieve independence and become integrated back into their community.

They include: *Day Treatment Program, Case Management, Outreach Services, Illness Management & Recovery Training, Medication Management, and Workshops.*

Located on Navy Hill on Gloria Drive
Appointment Hours:
Monday to Friday, 7:30 AM – 4:30 PM
Telephone: (670) 323-4060/4063

Wellness Clinic

Services include Victims of Crime Advocacy (VOCA) Program. Supports the provision of services to all victims of reported or unreported crime in the CNMI. These include victims who need counseling due to secondary trauma, domestic violence, depression, panic disorders, suicide ideation, and physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse.

Located on Navy Hill at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation, Wellness Clinic Room #19

Appointment Hours: Monday to Thursday, 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM
Telephone: (670) 234-8950 ext. 3517

Outreach presentations and exhibits about substance abuse prevention-related topics are available upon request.

Visit *http://chcc.gov.mp* to find the Behavioral Health Services Request Form or email *cgcprevention@gmail.com.* Services should be requested 2 weeks or more in advance.

This message is brought to you by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in partnership with the CHCC: Community Guidance Center.

IT'S BACK TO SCHOOL TIME!

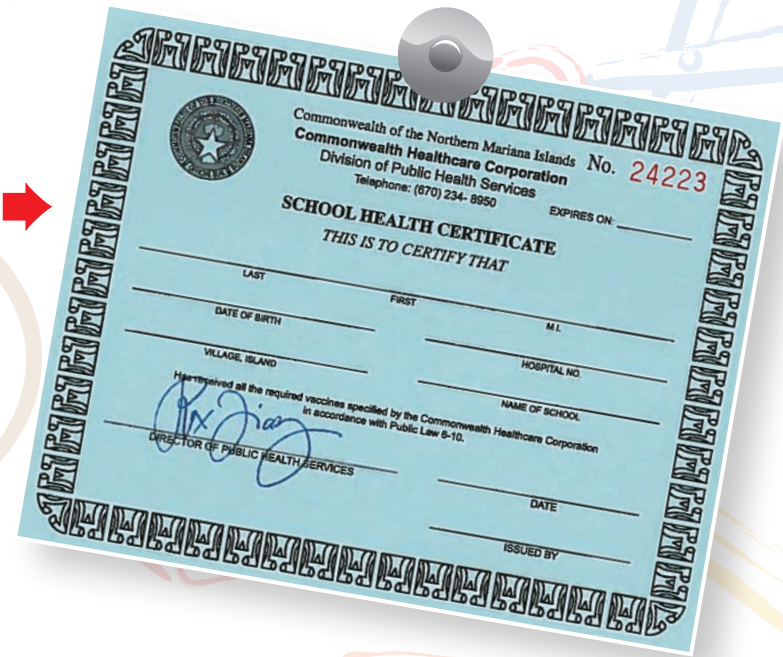
HEALTHY CHILDREN = HEALTHY STUDENTS

Hey Kids!

Did your Mom or Dad get you up-to-date with your immunizations?

Hey Parents!

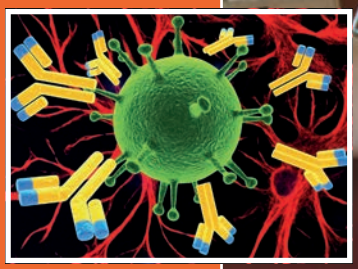
Does your child have a current health certificate like this?


Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation
Division of Public Health Services
Telephone: (670) 234- 8950
No. 24223
SCHOOL HEALTH CERTIFICATE
EXPIRES ON:
THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
LAST
FIRST
M.I.
DATE OF BIRTH
VILLAGE, ISLAND
HOSPITAL NO.
NAME OF SCHOOL
He/She received all the required vaccines specified by the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation in accordance with Public Law 6-10.
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
DATE
ISSUED BY

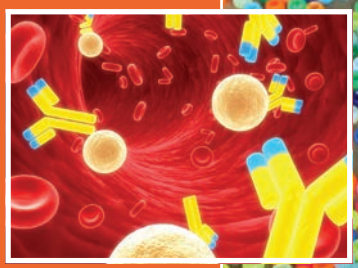
The Division of Public Health's Immunization Program is reminding you about Public Law 6-10:

All children must be up to date with all required immunizations prior to enrolling in any special education, preschool, elementary or secondary school and childcare facility. A valid school health certificate must be presented as evidence that all immunization requirements are met. This certificate must be renewed annually. These requirements protect our children and community from terrible vaccine preventable diseases.

IT'S TIME TO GIVE YOUR CHILDREN A "SHOT" AT A HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE FUTURE



Child develops antibodies which act like little soldiers waiting for diseases to enter the body.



Antibodies attack the disease and kills it. Child does not get sick...

.....and is healthy

Contact the Immunization Program at the Division of Public Health:

Saipan: 236-8745 | Tinian: 433-9233 | Rota: 532-9457

Other Tel. Nos.: 236-8745/8780/81/83

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov.vaccines

VACCINES SAVE LIVES. VACCINES ARE SAFE AND EFFECTIVE. VACCINES SAVE TIME AND MONEY.
VACCINES PROTECT US BY BUILDING IMMUNITY TO VACCINE PREVENTABLE DISEASES.

JON PEREZ
TAGA *Sports* Staff Writer

CROSSFIT TRIES TO GAIN

Jose Quan and a small group of certified CrossFit instructors are trying to get the program started in the CNMI. TAGA *Sports* sat down with CNMI CrossFit instructor Joey Tudela to discuss how they started, the pros and cons of this latest fitness movement, and their birth pains.

CrossFit is new to the CNMI. What have you and your group been doing to promote it in the community?

We've have been using different outlets such as social media (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter), word of mouth, and joining different fitness and community events such as the Hafa Adai 5K, Let's Move Marianas, Tagaman Triathalon, XTERRA Triathalon, Saipan Festival of Runs, and other small events.

Why did you choose to be involved in CrossFit and what have you gained from it?

We chose CrossFit as the base of our fitness methodology for our gym because it prepares you for anything and everything. Crossfit is a great program that develops your overall general physical preparedness. CrossFit also helps keep you safe by allowing you to scale movements to a person's ability as well as be coached to perform movements properly and safely.

As a gym, CrossFit has made us much healthier and fitter than we can ever imagine. We have athlete clients who can do certain movements now that they could not do before. All we aim to do as a gym is train our little community to take on a much more active lifestyle and include daily exercise as part of their daily routine.

Tell me a brief history of CrossFit in the CNMI.

Get Fit CNMI all started when Jose Quan introduced CrossFit to Patrick Alepuyo, David "Bic" Sablan, Joey Tudela, Jason Sablan, and Patrick Demapan after he graduated from Santa Clara University and moved back home to Saipan in 2010. As a group we worked out together then decided to invest in a small amount of equipment and setting up in a little 500-square-foot storefront in Garapan. We started out training about two to three athletes/clients and, with the help of word-of-mouth and social media, the gym grew. Once we started growing rapidly we realized we needed to acquire more equipment, space, and certified trainers so we did so.

Since we opened in 2010 we have gained over 50 to 60 solid athletes coming consistently in the gym. Our CrossFit-certified training staff has grown from two trainers to five: Jose Quan, Joey Tudela, Jason Sablan, Jason Tarkong, and Bo Palacios. Our facility has grown from a little 500-square-foot space to a 6,000-square-foot space filled with over 3,000 lbs of equipment.

All we aim to do is to improve our clients' fitness each day they come into the gym. Getting everybody to be fitter, healthier, and better than the day before is the ultimate goal.

How many practitioners of CrossFit are there in the CNMI? How many are certified trainers? And where they did get certified?

There are a lot of people who do CrossFit in the CNMI. Since the birth of the sport in 2007 its popularity has grown exponentially. It is still at the grassroots level on our little island and is growing slowly.

We know of six Level 1 certified CrossFit trainers, but there might be more out there that we don't know about yet. Of the six we know, they were certified in San Jose, California and Honolulu, Hawaii. CrossFit holds weekend certifications all around the world so there is not just one set place where you can get certified.

Would you recommend CrossFit to beginners or those who want to have an active lifestyle?

We would definitely recommend CrossFit to beginners and anybody wanting to live a more active lifestyle. Kids all the way up to seniors. It is a great way to get fit in the CNMI!

What's makes CrossFit different from lifting weights at the gym or running a few laps at the track?

Crossfit would combine the two into a single workout for that day. When you talk about lifting weights or running laps, most people repeat the same routine over and over again three times a week, every week. In Crossfit, there is a WOD (workout of the day) and the WOD changes everyday. It is always different and new. This keeps the athlete/exerciser excited and motivated and more likely to stay with the exercise program rather than give up after a week or so. When you lift weights at a gym or run laps you are usually alone, not being coached, but at Get Fit CNMI, for the hour that you are there, you have a trainer helping critique and motivate you.

Is CrossFit a great cross training for CNMI athletes?

Yes and no. Yes, Crossfit is a great way to condition any CNMI athlete. You will improve your strength, speed, endurance, agility, balance, coordination, to name a few. No, it is not entirely great for CNMI athletes. Crossfit is a general physical preparation system. This means that Crossfit will help prepare you for both the known and unknowable. When you say CNMI athlete, I am assuming you are referring to a sport-specific CNMI athlete…meaning a CNMI basketball athlete or CNMI tennis athlete. Both require a specific skill set and skill practice that only a basketball coach or tennis coach can offer. Crossfit will help get both athletes get fit. It will not help those athletes shoot a basketball or properly hit a tennis ball. That requires practice.

What advise can you give and how would you persuade an active person like me to try CrossFit?

The best advice I would say is to "get your feet wet." Try a Getfit CNMI day session. Try it out for a week. I can explain it word for word, but it will never be the same as trying it out and experiencing it firsthand. If your goal is to lose a few pounds, Crossfit can do that. If your goal is to be healthy, Crossfit can do that. If your goal is to improve in your sport, Crossfit can do that. If your goal is to play and have fun with your grandkids, Crossfit can do that too.

CrossFit has had its share of controversies in the U.S. What are the things you've been doing to avoid those kinds of issues happening here in the CNMI?

With any fitness regimen there is a risk of injury. You do your best to avoid those risks, but they do happen. Yes, we are aware of certain controversies that concern CrossFit around the world and not just in the U.S.

Safety is a priority of GetFit CNMI. We make sure to communicate that message to our members. We critique and demonstrate proper technique of all the exercise movements that will be performed for that day. For someone who is new to CrossFit, we start them out on our On-Ramp class. The goal of the class is to expose the client to the fundamental movements typically seen in the workout of the day (WOD). Generally, these movements are the squat, deadlift, push press, clean, etc… The On-Ramp class lasts a month and upon completion of the program, clients are free to attend the CrossFit group classes.

A TOEHOLD ON SAIPAN

ROSELYN MONROYO

JENNY HEGLAND

a golfer by trade, a volunteer at heart

MARK RABAGO
TAGA *Sports* Associate Editor

Meet Jenny Hegland—a golf instructor by trade but a community volunteer at heart.

Unbeknownst to everyone, the coordinator and prime mover of grassroots volunteer group United 4 Saipan is actually a golf instructor and in fact operates a golf academy at Laolao Bay Golf & Resort.

On the morning just before Typhoon Soudelor struck the island, Hegland was one of the 200 or so golfers teeing up for Day 2 of the 2015 Tournament of Champions at the picturesque Kagman golf course.

Little did everyone know that hours later, the island would be hit by its strongest typhoon in 30 years, leaving hundreds of Saipan residents with shattered homes and thousands more without power or running water for more than a month.

Recent transplant

Hegland relocated to Saipan just in March this year. Her sister, Kristy, and brother-in-law, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan tennis pro Luke Beling, have lived in the CNMI for the past two and half years.

"On my second visit to see them here, I decided to move here. I fell in love with Saipan because of the stunning natural scenery (including the golf courses), the kindness of the people here, and the lifestyle Saipan has to offer," she told TAGA *Sports*.

Hegland would eventually open Saipan Golf at Laolao Bay Golf & Resort with hopes of getting involved in community work in the future.

"Golf has been one of my lifelong passions and when I moved here I decided to make it my profession before pursing additional community engagement work, which is also one of my passions and what I was doing professionally in Minnesota before I moved here (I was working in Higher Education facilitating community partnerships focused on social justice).

"However, I believe it's important to become a part of a community and learn about its people, the culture, and the local values before diving into that kind of work. I wanted to spend time getting to know people, learning about the strengths of the community, and also about people's hopes and dreams for Saipan's future before deciding what kind of community-based work to pursue."

Hegland said her golf instructing business is a perfect conduit to get the pulse of the community.

"Opening Saipan Golf gave me the opportunity to do that. It allowed me to meet many different people [on] Saipan, including those who have lived here their whole lives, as well as those who have recently moved here. I also love the challenge of teaching golf because it's a unique sport that requires a sort of physical and mental synergy that I have only known on the links. The game requires physical technique, rhythmic athleticism, and mental/emotional strength and endurance. It's a beautifully challenging sport," she said.

Soldiering on after Soudelor

After the initial shock of seeing the impact of Typhoon Soudelor, the Minnesota State University alumnus would form U4S to provide access to water and essential necessities for the typhoon victims.

"The day after Soudelor hit, the first thing I did was return to Laolao Bay Golf. The driveway was still blocked by the fallen trees, and so I had to park at the end of their driveway and walk across the west course in order to reach the clubhouse," she said.

Walking across the course, Hegland was appalled as the neatly trimmed fairways and lush greens she played on the day before were entirely unrecognizable.

"The golf course, which was starting to feel like my home, was demolished and felt foreign. Seeing hundreds of huge trees completely uprooted and blown around like feathers evoked so much emotion in me and I felt a deep sense of loss like nothing I've experienced before. It also made me realize that if the golf course looked this way, many people's homes surely looked worse."

Later the same week, she returned to Laolao Bay Golf to help coach a youth golf camp because there were still students on island from Korea who had traveled here for the camp.

Then she had an epiphany.

"While I love teaching golf, doing so at that time felt wrong to me. It felt wrong to be spending my time on something leisurely when I knew so many in the community were suffering. This feeling inspired me to begin taking water into villages with my sister, Kristy Beling, which is what sparked the collaborative creation of United 4 Saipan," said Hegland.

To date, the grassroots volunteer group has more than 350 volunteers, racked up in excess of 5,100 volunteer hours, delivered more than 40,000 gallons of drinking water, and gave away some 3,000 family care packages (food, hygiene, and other essential necessities), 2,200 supplies and essential necessities (tarps, rope, mosquito coils, nets, blankets, etc.), and about 50 tents.

Currently, Hegland said they have started patching up roofs of houses destroyed by Soudelor, which includes cleanups. In all, she estimates that U4S has served more than 19,000 people on Saipan.

Daughter of a golf pro

Hegland owes her prowess in the links to her father, Ken Ellsworth.

"Everything I have learned about golf was taught to me by my dad. He is the Director of Instruction at the Jewel Golf Course in Lake City, Minnesota, and played on the PGA Tour from 1968 to 1976, winning the Bridgestone Golf Classic in Japan in 1970. My dad is an incredible teacher. He has a unique and intense way of teaching the game. Now that I am teaching golf myself, I have a newfound appreciation for what he has taught me, and I smile every time I notice myself unintentionally passing along his teaching to my students. He has had chronic heart problems for the past 14 years, but in 2012 he was blessed with a heart transplant and has recently been able to continue with his passion of teaching golf. Golf has been something that has connected my dad and me ever since I started playing when I was 15." ➜

Jenny Hegland poses with members of the voluneteer disaster assistance group she helped form inside the old Coffee Room in Garapan.

Golf particularly played a huge role in her life since high school.

"I played golf in college at Minnesota State University, Mankato, and was fortunate enough to play in two national championships and make lifelong friends from that experience. My golf family was the center of my collegiate experience. Golf has also taught me the importance of practice and discipline. Golf requires a tremendous amount of repetition and practice in order to see improvement. Golf is the area of my life I have been able to practice the most discipline in," she said.

Her impression of golfers on Saipan? Hegland was quick to say that they always have home-court advantage.

"The strength of local players [on] Saipan is that they know the intricacies of the courses. My steepest learning curve playing golf [on] Saipan has been learning the greens, especially because they are constructed with a different kind of grass than the courses I grew up on in Minnesota. The players here know the yardages, understand the break of the greens, and most have been practicing on these same courses for a very long time," she said.

Unfortunately, because of Typhoon Soudelor, her business, Saipan Golf, has had to take a backseat.

"My business has been on hold since the typhoon (in part because learning golf isn't really anyone's priority right now and many of my students have actually left the island since the typhoon, but also teaching has not been my priority). …Instead, I have spent every day since United 4 Saipan formed on recovery and rebuilding efforts."

Golf and U4S

Surprisingly, Hegland sees some parallels between her work as U4S coordinator and her job as a golf instructor.

"In golf I believe all students have strengths to draw on that can help their games. Likewise, as community members, I believe we all have strengths to draw on that can serve society. It is my hope that whether through U4S or other volunteer organizations, volunteers within our community are able to serve in a way that both capitalizes on their unique talents and also aligns those with the needs of community as they continue to change."

Hegland said the whole Soudelor ordeal gave her a newfound appreciation for what her golf students usually experience—especially those holding a golf club for the first time—in what it takes to remain committed to something new, especially when it feels entirely foreign.

"In many ways this is what my experience has been like working with recovery efforts through U4S. It has not been

easy and the needs and information available are constantly changing. But as a volunteer team and community we've remained committed."

She also gained new insights on managing volunteer organizations, especially those dedicated to relief efforts following disasters. "Talk with existing organizations doing relief work so you can understand the rebuilding needs of the community. The short-term needs are different from the long-term needs, and our understanding of how to address those is continually evolving."

Hegland pointed to the importance of CNMI Community Advocates for Recovery Efforts, or C.A.R.E., which is a community-wide collaborative that was recently formed to build a resilient community and identify, facilitate, and deliver resources and long-term support to address the unmet needs of individuals and families impacted by disaster.

She said the information and updates CNMI C.A.R.E. will disseminate would provide important direction for the long-term rebuilding needs.

"If there is an unmet need that you have the capacity to address even in a small way, please do so, and do so in coordination or collaboration with others if at all possible. U4S started because community members who cared came together and took the initiative to help their neighbors. We all share in the responsibility of helping our people and our island rebuild. No one agency, the government, or group can do this alone. We need everyone," said Hegland.

Jenny Hegland poses with fellow volunteers and Typhoon Soudelor victims.

ROSELYN MONROYO

To know where the fish are in the vastness of the sea, you don't stare down into the waters but straight ahead at the horizon—to where the birds are flocking.

This is the first lesson I learned on my first fishing trip—aboard one of the boats that participated in the 31st Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament. I found it odd that when you're trying to catch fish, you actually need to look for a totally different species, something that doesn't even live in the water.

When the alarms sounded at 6am on July 26, a flotilla of 58 boats of different sizes roared off to each of their destinations, with the goal to take home the heaviest billfish, yellowfin, wahoo, mahi-mahi, and skipjack. I was lucky enough to be with the 2004 champion, Dr. Hoa Van Nguyen, who now operates the boat *Blu-by-U*.

Blu-by-U is a five-man team composed of Nguyen, Johnny Cruz, Kerry Cutting, Hieu Campus, and Joseph Malicsi, all of whom have been together for as long as five years.

Also on her first derby trip like me was

fishing and life: a first-timer goes to the derby

FRAULEINE S. VILLANUEVA
TAGA *Sports* Staff Writer

The Blu-by-U crew teams up and scrambles to the port side of the boat to bring in a billfish.
FRAULEINE S. VILLANUEVA

Bao-Thanh, Nguyen's 12-year-old daughter. Having gone on fishing trips with her father since she was just 7, Bao-Thanh knew how to look for fish.

"Trust the birds," she told me.

True enough, just minutes after we arrived at a place where black birds were flocking past 7am, we caught a good-sized Bonita. The first catch of the day was a pretty exciting one. However, we shouldn't just stay in that place alone. We needed to catch the big ones.

Driving the boat back and forth in the waters west of Saipan and Tinian, Nguyen and I got a chance to chat a little before our big catch.

I was told that we have to keep the boat moving because there are a lot of sharks and, given a chance, they'll eat the bait.

As with most fishermen, Nguyen believes that sometimes you just have to rely on luck.

"After you get the skills, most of it is luck," he said.

Observing the crew, their intimate knowledge of what to do with the various baits on board showed. Nguyen also knew where to go, even explaining to me the concept of the fishing bank—a shallow ➜

The crew of Blu-by-U shows off their biggest catch on the second day of the 31st Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament—a billfish that weighed 115.5 lbs.

FRAULEINE S. VILLANUEVA

area in the sea, almost like an underwater hill—where the "small fishes are and where big fishes might go."

"Fishing is relaxing. You might need to learn some skills first but after a while it's relaxing," Nguyen said.

And as relaxing as being out at sea is, after hours of waiting, all of the crew with the exception of Nguyen all had their nap times, only to be awoken by a snap in one of the lines.

That sound is enough for everyone to go to their positions to reel in the catch. Even before it gets close, they have a hunch right away what and how big the fish is.

Finally, three hours after the first catch, they were able to reel in a big one—a billfish that turned out to be 115.5 lbs.

I also had the chance to reel in my very own catch. More than the excitement of being able to successfully pull in the fish, I was glad they were game enough to humor a first-timer like me, considering that they were in the middle of a competition.

However, not every reel in is successful. In one of those tug-of-wars between the fish and the fisherman, sometimes you just have to let go. One instance was when Campus spent a good 20 minutes just trying to reel a fish near the boat. The fish initially put up a good fight, struggling and forcing Campus to draw out the line, but after a while it seemed as though it decided to give up. Campus reeled and spun the line, but what came out of the water was just half of a good-sized tuna! Turns out Campus wasn't fighting the fish itself but was having a tug-of-war with a shark! And, boy, was the shark successful.

Another first experience I had while waiting for the fish to get baited was seeing a pod of dolphins play alongside our boat. There must have been more than five dolphins there and the almost glass-like blue waters made it even easier to spot them.

Although the water was good for the dolphins to play in, the water was calmer than what was ideal for fishing and it was too hot. We did not catch any more big ones, though we tried to catch other kinds as well.

As we slowly made our way back to the island, we passed by a buoy that Nguyen told me is where fishermen put bait on during the mahi-mahi season to catch them. And just as he finished saying that, a big mahi-mahi leaped out of the water! Naturally, it was Nguyen's time to get hooked! We went back to the site, changing baits to fresh squid to try and lure the mahi-mahi. It did no good, though. A couple of rounds and several minutes of waiting and still no fish. As it was only mostly me and Nguyen who got a good look at the fish, the other crew joked about it not being really mahi-mahi, especially because it was not mahi season.

Despite that, Nguyen said he is happy with the turnout. At the end of the competition, *Blu-By-U* was able to place second in both the billfish and the skipjack categories, with their catch weighing 132.5 and 18.05 lbs, respectively.

"We're very happy about the turnout. We got very lucky, blessed by catching some fish. It was very tough because the weather is too hot but we feel very blessed," Nguyen said.

He said every fishing derby on Saipan is memorable. "Win or lose, it's the camaraderie and the friendship that we find here that is very nice. Win or lose, it's a fun trip. Everyone goes out to try and do the best we can and have a lot of fun. It's not just a matter of winning, it's a matter of having fun."

Fishing also teaches patience, he said. "Patience for everything in life. You just enjoy, you don't have to catch anything, it's just a waiting game, enjoy the people on the boat and be patient to catch the next fish."

Twelve hours on a boat will surely test your patience, especially if you're not a real fisherman. But aside from that and some fishing techniques, I will not forget the lessons that I caught from that trip: Enjoy the experience, strangers can teach you a lot about life, and that sometimes, in places where you least think you might find what you're looking for, there you will find it.

After minutes of playing tug-of-war with a shark, the shark was evidently victorious as Hieu was only able to reel in half a fish.

FRAULEINE S. VILLANUEVA

FRAULEINE S. VILLANUEVA

Brothers in baseball

JONPEREZ
TAGA *Sports* Staff Writer

United by America's favorite pastime, the Little League community in this year's Senior League World Series in Bangor, Maine, came to the aid of Team CNMI after Saipan was leveled by Typhoon Soudelor last Aug. 2.

The typhoon's tornado-like winds caused enormous damage on Saipan. Classified as a Category 3 hurricane, Soudelor destroyed houses and toppled power poles, rendering the entire island without power and water for more than a month and affecting the lives of thousands of residents and the business community.

Even members of the CNMI Senior League All Stars, who were competing thousands of miles away to represent the Asia Pacific region in the World Series, were not spared, with four players finding out they were homeless when they returned to Saipan.

"I think there were more members of the team that were affected by the typhoon. But I stopped asking when I learned four of them lost their homes and all of their belongings. It was really a heartbreaking story," said All-Stars head coach Lawrence Camacho.

Coming to their rescue was the host team and the entire 2015 Senior League World Series community. Their fundraising drive of leaving donation jars left at strategic places of the Shawn T. Mansfield Stadium and "passing the hat" collected $5,000, which they gave to the team during the awards banquet at the Cross Insurance Center.

"The donation is a combination of a lot of teams in cooperation with the Bangor, Maine community. The Maine team that participated in the World Series came up with passing a hat every game. So a lot of people were involved," said Camacho.

Even 15-year-old Texas native Harrison Burks helped out by starting a GoFundMe.com account that has already accumulated $4,875 in donations from faceless people who wanted to do their share to help the Saipan-based team rebuild.

Burks, an avid baseball fan like his father, followed the Texas team from West University Place just to watch them play in the Senior League World Series. The Clint Sauls-managed squad won their second straight World Series crown with an 8-1 victory over Holmes County Little League of Ohio.

"They were very good people. The City of Bangor gave the [Saipan] team [players] $300 each in cashier's checks. Burks handed $255 to each one. And Virginia State donated $2,000 that was divided among the 15 players. In total, each player received close to $700 cash," said Camacho.

Camacho said the coaching staff advised the players to use the money for the recovery efforts. "We made it clear to all that they should use it in building their homes. It will be an insult to all our donors if they use it to buy other stuff."

Most of the players are already getting back to their normal, everyday lives and will soon be busy with practice after school opened.

"We learned that there's one that has already [obtained] help in rebuilding their house but there's still one whose family is living in a house provided by the company where his parents are working. They are still waiting for FEMA's help to rebuild their home," Camacho said.

During the weeklong Senior League World Series, the coaching staff and other Saipan Little League officers who joined the trip tried their best to keep the news about Saipan's situation among themselves.

"We learned about it from A.J. Murig through Facebook. We were trying to keep the news away from the kids since we and their parents don't want them to get worried about their homes and families back home," said Camacho, who added that even the coaches were affected by the storm.

"Manager Greg Camacho's outside kitchen was damaged while assistant coach John Manibusan's roof was blown away. So we also received cash since the donations were for the entire team. I had less damage to my house, just uprooted trees, so I used the money to buy water, flashlight, batteries, canned goods, and other essentials," said Camacho.

"We're really thankful for all the help that we received during the Senior League World Series. The boys will remember this generous gesture for the rest of their lives. We're all going to get through this, the entire community will bounce back."

DANIEL SON

MARK RABAGO
TAGA *Sports* Associate Editor

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Former CNMI youth tennis player Daniel Son left the CNMI in May 2007 to pursue his college education in Hawaii. But in the 10 years he has lived on Saipan, the now 31-year-old overseas sales manager of an IT trading company in South Korea learned several valuable life lessons.

Daniel, along with his mother, Young, and little brother Nicolas were familiar fixtures at the American Memorial Park tennis courts, spending hours of practice that led to the two brothers winning many age group championships, and Young herself winning her fair share of women's titles.

While Young was an accomplished netter in her own right, it was actually her husband and Daniel's father, former South Korea tennis pro DongGon Son, who was instrumental in Daniel's introduction to tennis.

"I've been playing tennis since I was 11. My father was a pro and he asked me to start playing tennis near our home in Korea," he told TAGA *Sports*.

That began a lifelong passion for tennis that he brought with him to Saipan. Immediately after arriving on the island, Daniel went under the tutelage of former Pacific Oceania team captain and NMSA Sports Hall of Famer Jeff Race.

MARK RABAGO

With a mean forehand and unparalleled court coverage because of his height and wingspan, Daniel soon dominated his age group and won a number of tournaments on island. Along the way, he earned an associate degree in Liberal Arts at the Northern Marianas College.

In May 2007, Daniel left the island for good to enroll at the University of Hawaii in Manoa, where he pursued a bachelor's degree in Business.

Currently, Daniel works for Pittasoft with plans to go work overseas in the next five years. But his job hasn't prevented him from continuing to play tennis.

"I still play tennis three times a week for fun and have also joined some amateur tennis competitions playing doubles," he said.

While he has yet to sniff a championship in South Korea, Daniel said he has already made it to the semifinals three times this year.

Daniel admits that he misses Saipan and has even tried to visit a couple of times. "Two years ago I went to Guam and early this year was trying to visit Saipan but I couldn't go because all the hotels were fully occupied at the time."

Aside from its white sand beaches and azure waters, he also misses the free public tennis courts on the islands.

"All tennis courts in South Korea you have to pay. When I tell others that I grew up here, most of them agree that it's a nice place to live, with fresh air and nice beaches," he said.

As for his future plans, Daniel volunteered that he plans to marry in March next year.

He also gave a shoutout to current youth tennis players of the Commonwealth. He told them to always listen to their coaches and join all the tournaments they can.

"You really can't learn tennis without a coach and it's very hard to improve without one. Those young kids, our junior tennis players, sure look good but they need to play in tournaments to become better."

MARK RABAGO

Above: A young Daniel Son in action at the American Memorial Park. **Opposite page left:** Daniel poses with organizers of the Shell Tennis Open on Saipan. **Opposite page right:** Daniel, third row right, poses with other players in his native Korea.

JUN DAYAO

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ISLANDER STRONG

The Pacific islands have no shortage of legendary strong men as told (not written, at least not until more recent times) in local lore and passed along through the generations. "Frequent themes include gigantism, bravery, physical prowess, and great strength" (Mitchell 1986)—maybe or maybe not embellished in little bits and pieces here and there (as stories are likened to do) over the course of time.

For the Mariana Islands, Guam's Chief Masala and, of course, the Tinian legend of Chief Taga were "strong and boisterous chiefs of enormous size, able to perform gargantuan feats. Each could build a huge latte house with the massive stones" (Torres 2003: 11). And, although "folkloric themes of culture heroes with extraordinary strength are widespread throughout Oceania and elsewhere (Knapper 1995; Flood et al. 1999; Taonui 2006), Chamorro legends are about more than the strong chiefs of old. They are about the ever-present embodied spirits of these ancestral culture heroes. Despite generations of condemnation by church officials, Chamorros (and Carolinians) maintain beliefs about the active role of ancestral spirits in their daily lives"(Thompson 1946; Mitchell 1986).

So, in a metaphorical (perhaps fantastical) sense then, spiritual true-believers might be wondering why an enraged chief from our neighboring islands to the south chose to pass through and wreak havoc on an unsuspecting Marianas. One of Pohnpei's soudelors (i.e., legendary chiefs) made landfall on Saipan sometime in the latter part of Aug. 2, 2015, and tore through hundreds of homes, uprooted hundreds of trees, downed hundreds more power poles, and left thousands of stunned Saipan residents in the dark (partly due to the complete annihilation of its power grid, but more importantly, about why?)—"No one was prepared." "According to Pohnpeian oral history, the first Saudeleur were brothers Olisihpa and Olosohpa, whom the site refers to as "canoe-faring sorcerers" who were given powers by the gods and who "used their magic to build Nan Madol" (PDN, M. Hernandez). Apparently, they are not above using their powers for destruction as well.

Or maybe it's just me over-thinking and I suppose it makes sense that in a time devoid of electricity, my nostalgic mind again wanders back to a time of my youth when the concepts of electrical power and running water were as distant and as mystical as the stories and colorful figures talked about at bedtime—we didn't have television, but somehow I remember "watching" during story-time. With the same clarity that many of my stateside counterparts can visualize, say, the Justice League, I can see (as told by our elders) the radical, island heroes who could rip whole coconut trees from the ground (roots and all), dodge raindrops in the thickest of storms, and spend time playing at the bottom of the deepest seas. Just imagine the level of athleticism these beasts possessed.

One of my favorite characters was an ancestral chief, Pilitas, who broke solid wood paddles (as big as trees) with each stroke on a canoe—he always set out to sea with stacks of newly carved paddles to compensate—and yes, he ripped whole trees out of the ground too, but more importantly he protected the clan from outside attacks by wannabe conquering enemies.

Typhoon Soudelor is being pegged as the strongest storm on Earth this year, leaving in its aftermath what seemed, at first, an insurmountable task for recovery. Yet while scary and destructive at its peak, Soudelor also left in its wake a rising tide of an unbeaten people—an awakening of sleeping, little giants, if you will. Even the most stagnant of people were suddenly being seen out and about throughout the community working and providing a helping hand to any neighbors in need.

Perhaps then the silver lining in the Soudelor cloud is that it reminds many of us that we have an inner (or rather inherent strength) as islanders and it shows us that our rightful place is not on a cold couch in front of a TV, but rather outside tending to livestock and cultivating our lands—we were built to work for the betterment of our families and for our society as a whole.

If you told me a couple of months ago that my kids and I would have to go days, weeks or much less months without power, I might have laughed. How could "the kids" go without aircon at night or what will they do without the Internet or TV? The fact is that kids are far more resilient than us adults, but they only know what we've taught them to know. Sadly, Typhoon Soudelor is teaching my kids more about the value of a little elbow grease and the pleasures of a simple life than I ever have before—card and board games with "Grandma" by candlelight are the new norm at my house. Among other things, though, I was shocked (guilty, really) to learn that my teenage kids didn't know how to wash clothes by hand—we have since solved that problem. But it really is a problem and sad that so many of us have become so dependent on powered machinery for everything from the clothes we wear, to the food we eat and even to the relationships we hold. We need more face-to-face time, not more Facebook time.

If ever we were ripe for a paradigm shift in the way we live, it's now. The lessons learned from Soudelor (albeit through some hard times for some more than others) are clear: (1) there is a big difference between our needs versus our wants, (2) our physical and mental health play a large role in how much we can take in times of disaster, and (3) given the need, our islands are abundantly rich in natural resources and a genuine community of islander strong people who care.

I would be remiss not to mention Chief Aghurub who in the face of desperate times persevered and rallied his people to survive against all odds (coincidentally after typhoons ravished their home islands). I'm pretty sure he was islander strong too.

Tan Siu Lin Foundation

salutes members of the CNMI sports community for taking an active role in the recovery efforts on Saipan.

Tan Holdings

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CNMI Public School System believes children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive. Educating and culturing our future children on the practices of healthy eating and active living fosters academic and life achievement. We encourage and welcome support from parents and community members to enthusiastically support CNMI PSS initiatives of our Wellness Policy.

For our future we put **STUDENTS FIRST,**
because we believe.....

Health is Wealth

- PSS provides balanced breakfasts and lunches modeled after the MyPlate model for a nutritious diet; don't forget your whole grain, protein, fruit, vegetable, and milk!
- Students need energy to think and learn and to be active; encourage students to eat a full school meals to energize their brain for learning and their body to be active and strong.

- PSS supports the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable of the Month nutrition education program, which provides a tasty exposure to food and learning in the classroom every week in younger grades.
- To receive all the vitamins and minerals the body needs, it is recommended to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables from all colors of the rainbow.

- Whether students are participating in ROTC, tournaments with MISO, recess daily at school, or actively learning in the classroom, PSS supports our students moving!
- Exercise and physical activity promotes brain activity to focus and learn, improves sleep, relieves stress, and benefits overall health and body.